

CELEBRATING THE 150TH BIRTHDAY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

(Mr. MCINTYRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy birthday to the United States Department of Agriculture, which celebrated its 150th birthday on May 15.

In my home State of North Carolina, we have contributed to our Nation's agricultural success, and the Seventh Congressional district is the most productive agricultural district in the State, with over \$2.5 billion worth of agricultural products sold each year.

Because our farms and our farmers and our agribusinesses are so critical to our State's economy, it is vital that the USDA partner with us, as it does with States throughout our country, helping farmers manage risk; providing a safety net for producers who experience disasters from weather, pests, or price collapse; giving rural communities the tools they need to be able to make infrastructure improvements; investing in cutting-edge agricultural research at our country's premiere research institutions and land grant universities. These all allow for breakthroughs in crop science and animal agriculture.

Indeed, we say happy birthday to our USDA. We know that the State of North Carolina, and all of our States that benefit from its services, allow our farmers and our rural communities in rural America to enjoy the strong positive relationship to share our future together. Let's keep our farmers and our rural communities strong.

NDAAs PROTECTS TRICARE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today the House will debate the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2013. The House Armed Services Committee approved this bipartisan bill last week by a vote of 56-5.

Earlier this year, the administration announced an increase in the TRICARE enrollment fees by up to 345 percent. As chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, I am pleased the committee refused to authorize a provision to forward the administration's unfair proposal, which would destroy jobs.

Our brave men and women in uniform and their families have devoted their lives to defend our country. Their service to our Nation should be considered a prepayment of health care benefits and retirement.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and give our military families the fairness they deserve so they can work for peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Welcome to Washington, Realtors and CPAs.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DETECTIVE WALTER C. MEY, JR.

(Mr. CICCILINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICCILINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Detective Walter C. Mey, Jr., who works for the Middletown Police Department in the First Congressional District of Rhode Island.

Detective Mey recently received an honorable mention from the National Association of Police Organizations, which praised his work as part of their Top Cops award of 2012. Detective Mey was recognized for his efforts in apprehending a murder suspect last year.

The Top Cops award recognizes law enforcement officers who have been nominated by their peers for going above and beyond the call of duty. An 18-year veteran of the Middletown Police Department, Detective Mey has been awarded a Meritorious Service Medal from the Department. I congratulate Detective Mey today on his impressive achievements, and thank him for his continuing service on behalf of our community.

This week, as our Nation observes National Police Week, we are mindful that Detective Mey and every retired and every active duty Rhode Island police officer deserves our tremendous gratitude for their commitment to ensuring our safety.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all members of the gallery that they are guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of the proceedings is in violation of House rules.

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RALPH CHESHIER

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. I rise today to honor Mr. Ralph Cheshier, a veteran teacher in the Valley View School District of Jonesboro, Arkansas.

For 37 years, Mr. Cheshier has taught his students the principles of agriculture. Mr. Cheshier is also a longtime member of the Partners in an Active Learning Setting, or PALS program. PALS is a mentoring program that matches high school students in the Vocational Agriculture Leadership Class with kindergarten students to develop personal skills and explore interests in plants and animals. The Valley View PALS chapter is one of only 10 in Arkansas.

Mr. Cheshier has a unique style of teaching through storytelling. He loves

spending time with his students in the school greenhouse and shop, teaching them valuable skills and making his students become self-sufficient members of society. Mr. Cheshier will be remembered for his contributions to the academic and life development of his students. Many of the lessons he taught will go well beyond the classroom and will stick with those students forever.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent people like Mr. Cheshier, who make Arkansas a great place to live.

Happy retirement.

USPS REFORM

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, last week we learned that the Williams Street mail processing facility in my Buffalo community will remain open despite proposals by the Postal Service to close it.

While this is welcome news, I remain deeply disappointed by the "decide first and justify later" approach that the Postal Service has used throughout this process. From failing to notify residents of proposed closures to poor record-keeping at public meetings, the amount of community involvement in this process has been unacceptable, and now postal workers are faced with uncertainty as the status of their place of employment remains unclear.

Mr. Speaker, we must take advantage of this temporary moratorium on closures in order to take a serious look at the facility closure process and to make much-needed reforms.

OUR NATIONAL DEBT

(Ms. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of receiving a letter from a constituent, a 14-year-old young man of Star Boy Scouts who is seeking to become an Eagle Scout, and he is concerned about the Federal debt and deficit.

Christopher Woloshyn wrote to me:

I think that the Federal deficit is too high and overwhelming for Americans, and will affect people like me even more in the future . . . I believe our government must stop spending more money than it takes in. Can you please help our government reduce our national deficit so myself and fellow young Americans will not be burdened by our national debt?

Christopher, I could not agree more with you, and you have the wisdom of someone who can look at this issue with fresh eyes.

We here in the House of Representatives, under the leadership of Speaker BOEHNER, are dedicated to making sure that we do not add to that debt, which